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A LETTER TO ROBERT WALPOLE Esqr.

[Wm Thomas]

A

LETTER

TO

ROBERT WALPOLE

Esqr.

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ROBERT WALPOLE

Esq.

Sr.

IN my Cooler Thoughts, I crave leave to resume the Subject we parted upon at the *Star* and *Garter*, for in the Present Reflection of every *English-Man* it ought to have the first Place, and I beg you will allow me to Prosecute my Argument upon it. The *British* Liberties are threaten'd with Death, and will assuredly Expire if they are not made the immediate Care of every one that desires to live in the Enjoyment of 'em, and the Trouble I now offer is an Effect of my regard to them.

We hop'd for greater Blessings in the more distant Consequences of the Revolution, than in those that immediately succeeded to it, for the Prince of *Orange* being without Issue, was Elected as a Steward to the Crown till the Duke of *Glouceſter* should be at Age to enjoy it, whom we had our Eyes upon as the Heir that might Rule through a long Tract of Time, and leave Issue of his own Body to stifle the Disputes that otherways might arise about the Succession, in Time to come.

Our Loss in the Death of the Duke. seem'd fully repair'd in the Act of Settlement that plac'd the Crown upon the Head of a *Protestant* Prince who has Issue of his own Body; and whose Foreign Dominions we expected shou'd have added to us Riches; Power and Strength to the *Protestant* Interests; more Allies, and greater Advantages, in the Alliances already made than were known to our Fathers.

The Limitation Act, also freed us from the Inquietudes we had undergone, by the bad Consequences we apprehended from the Power of the Crown. That Act also provided, that *England* should never yield Money, Men, or Shipping, or any Ways engage in any War, in the Defence or Increase of the Foreign Dominions without leave from the Parliament of *England*, and

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being as we thought, every Way ſecur'd; (by the Demiſe of the late Queen) we expected to find our ſelves in *Heſperian* Gardens gathering *Apples* of Gold; but when I ſaw in what Manner the late Miniſtry was uſed, I began to apprehend the King would endeavour to make his will the Law of our Lives, and Fortunes, as it was to thoſe he Rul'd before we Conſtituted him our Ruler.

It was my wiſh that Miniſtry might be remov'd, but with the late Lord *Halliſax*, I was much offended with the Way by which 'twas done, for the Miniſters were accuſed, Try'd, and Condemn'd at *Hanover* before the King had a Right of making himſelf their Judge. Moſt of the Accuſers were Parties, and accuſed upon the View of Rivalling 'em in the Poſts they poſſeſs'd, and Judgment was given before they could be heard for themſelves, or by any Friend for them, and their Judge had no ſooner ſett Foot on *Engliſh* Shore, but he executed Judgement without the leaſt Appearance of Juſtice or Mercy, and diſplac'd the Miniſtry in a ſort of Anger, that was unbecoming the Character of a King, and highly inconſiſtent with the Accounts before given of his Wiſdom, Clemency, &c. For this indicated a Rage, and diſorder of mind, that threatned the *Roman* Calamities under the furious Adminiſtration of *Marius*, and *Sylla*. There was a Decency due to Men of their Quality, and Thankful Acknowledgements for their hearty Concurrence in the making him our King, and doing nothing in Prejudice of his Succeſſion, when they had Power, but, as no ties of Gratitude, Policy or Intereſt, could prevent ſo raſh an Action, when he was hardly poſſeſt of Three Crowns that came to him in great Meaſure by their Courteſy, I concluded his Succeſſion predicted Ruin to thoſe Liberties, we Elected him the Guardian of; for the Uſage the *Tories* then receiv'd, the *Whigs* may expect in their turn, and the whole Nation, at long Run be ſubjected to an Arbitrary Power.

The King had no ſooner recover'd the fatigue of his Journey to us, but he Iſſued out a printed Order to the *Clergy*, which preſcribed Words, and Matter for the Pulpit, calculated for purpoſes of State, without regard to the Honour, and ſafety of the Church of which they were Miniſters, it charg'd them with Scurrility in their Spiritual Diſcourſes, and commanded, on pain of his Diſpleaſure, that no Words ſhould fall from them that might give Offence to the Perſons, or Profeſſion of the *Preſbyterians*. The Scurrility charg'd upon the Clergy, brought their Credit

Credit as low as the fair Ladies that deal in *Oyſters* at *Billingſgate*.

Then as no Indecencies were imputed to the *Preſbyterians*, no Form injoyn'd for their Pulpits, nor reſtraint laid upon their *Lips*, that Order ſeem'd the ſureſt method that could be taken for bringing the Clergy into higheſt Contempt, and ſending the *Churches* Children into the fold of *Preſbytery*. This bound the Church, as in the Caſe of *Sampſon*, that the *Philiſtines* might have Power to accompliſh her Deſtruction. Tho' I had never fallen in with the *Tory* Party in Matters of *State*, yet I retain'd a reverence for the *Church*, that made me queſtion the Veracity of the King's Vows in her Favour, when he had done all this in the Deſtruction of her Credit, and Authority.

The Act of Limitation was thought the beſt Fence that ever was made for our Liberties, and without it we ſhould not have thought our ſelves ſafe in Electing a Stranger for our King; but that was broken through in the Purchaſe of the Principalities of *Bremen*, and *Ferden*, for enlarging the Electorate of *Hannover*, for it was made with *Engliſh* Money, Blood, and Shipping, without leave from, or once putting the Queſtion to the Parliament. This Breach bears a dreadfull Aſpect in its Conſequences, which ſhall be ſpoken to in their place. As the Act was no Law to the Crown in this Caſe, what can make it ſo in Time to come? For if the Crown could violate that Act before it was Poſſeſt of the Army that now is, It may with this vaſt Army, diſſolve our whole Conſtitution, for the Army gives greater Power to the Crown than it poſſeſt in any Reign before this, and extends the *Prerogative*, which we thought more reſtrain'd than ever, to what Length he pleaſes, who has, or ſhall have the wearing of the Crown; and thoſe that Gave, Procur'd, Advis'd, or any ways encourag'd the Gift of ſo great Power to the Crown ought to be Recorded Enemies to their Country, and treated as ſuch whilſt they are in being to anſwer to their Charge

We expected a Treaſure, from *Hanover*, that would largely reduce the Debts of the Nation: but on the contrary, the King has ſent vaſt Sums of *Engliſh* Money thither, and its to be fear'd, the Foreign Dominions will load the Nation with Debts that will compleat its Deſtruction. Beſides, the *Turks* and Others, that came over with the King have ſent large Sums to the other Side, which ſhews there is a Deſign upon the Nation to iſſue out its *Caſh*, make *Hanover* the greateſt Treaſury in *Europe* and

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England, only a feeding Pond to it; which will make *Hanover* Principal, and *England* a Province to it.

When the King iſſued out Writs for a *Parliament*, he Iſſued out Four Hundred Thouſand Pounds from the Treaſury for the needy Voters of the Nation, to ptoſtitute their Conſciences to his Will, which deſtroy'd all Freedom in the Choice, and made it an undue Election; and the Friends of the Court that had loſt their Elections in the Country, by a vaſt Majority, were ſure of carrying it in the Houſe, upon a Petition, the Equity of the Choice not being in Queſtion there, for it was the Character only of the Petitioner that was conſider'd; therefore the Country is not repreſented in this Parliament, nor it's Acts anyways binding. This Conſtraint, upon the Liberty of the Subjects will, Sooner or Later, give up the Lives, and Fortunes of the Three Kingdoms to the Mercy of the Crown, for if the Crown may thus purchaſe Parliaments of the Country, it will be capable, in time to come, of Purchaſing of the Parliament what ſhall be thought needful, in breaking the Limits of it's Prerogative.

Standing Armies, in Time of Peace, ever were the Terror of the *Engliſh* Nation, and the Army that King *James* raiſ'd, allarm'd the Nation and produc'd the Change that depriv'd him of his Crowns, tho' he maintain'd it without Expence to the Publick, King *George* rais'd an Army in Time of Peace, at the Expence of the Publick, and increas'd it to a much greater Body than King *James's* conſiſted of, which gives a Sword into his Hand that carries Weight, and Edge Enough to cut through all the Laws in which our Liberties have Life. It was the ſtanding Maxim of our Fathers, never to truſt the Prince with a Power that could intirely Subject them to his Will, and if this was a juſt and neceſſary Conſideration in their Days, what makes us ſo indifferent to it now? If King *George* ſhould never exert the Power he has obtain'd. to the prejudice of our Liberties, yet the Succeſſors to the Crown will ſucceed to the Power they find it Poſſeſt of, and may uſe it, to our Deſtruction, when they pleaſe, Therefore we are bound, by all the ways in our Power, to reduce the, now boundleſs, *Prerogative* to ſuch juſt Limits as may Secure us in the Liberties, and Rights we are born to as *Engliſh* Men.

Impriſoning many of the *Tory* Party without Proof of any Thing done by them to deſerve it, was Illegal, aud a Precedent that may be the Ruin of all Parties in their Turns, for the Reſentment

ſentment of the Oppreſſd will make em think of Repriſals when Occaſion ſhall offer, and ſuch Reſentments being warranted by the Precedents of each others giving, one great Body of the People will be always under Oppreſſion.

The *Common-Prayer* was burn'd publickly, on *Corn-hill* on the 5th of *November* 1715. and Confuſion Drunk to the *Church* and *Clergy* of *England* The Memory of the late *Queen*, from time to time, has been intollerably Revil'd, Gentlemen have been Can'd, Kick't, and Toſſ'd in Blankets at the *Roe-Buck* in *Cheapſide*, the *Mugg-Houſe* in *Salisbury Court*, and other places, for refuſing to Joyn in theſe Abominations, and the Aggreſſors Cheriſh'd, and Stil'd the beſt Friends of the Government. When thoſe Severities had provock'd the Oppreſſed party to make Repriſals upon a few Meeting Houſes, the King Iſſued out a Printed Order for all *Whigs*, to Shoot, or Deſtroy, by what way they could, any that ſhould be charg'd with concern in any Riot in time to come, which conſtituted any malicious Man the *Accuſer*, *Judge*, *Jury*, and *Executioner* of his Neighbour, for the charge of a Riot, upon the Defunct, Juſtifies the *Murder*, and Indemnifys the Deſtroyer by Vertue of that Order, which makes us the Prey of one another.

That great breach of Faith with the Priſoners at *Preſton*, and the King's violating his Promiſes, made to the Duke of *Somerſet* in the Caſe of Sir William *Wyndham*, proves us under a Yoke, that makes every Man's Life, and Liberty Diſcretionary only. Beſides ſeveral Gentlemen, taken at *Preſton*. were unwarrantably Try'd, by a Court Marſhall, as half pay Officers, and put to Death before their Friends could have time to uſe their Intereſt for Saving them, or to Supply'em with thoſe Conveniencies that are Natural, and Needful on ſuch Occaſions, and would have been Afforded, had they been Tryed in the Deliberate way our Laws ſtrictly require, and it's well known they were not half pay Officers, their Commiſſions not being renewed within ſix Months after the Demiſe of the late Queen, for by the Act of Settlement, ſuch as were not fell of Courſe; therefore they were not liable to the Jurisdiction of that Court.

Nothing has been done with a more formidable Aſpect, as to us than the taking the two thirds of all the *Papiſts*, Eſtates, on Account of ſome that appeared in Arms at *Perth*, and *Preſton*. The King does not make Religion the Reaſon, but declares it done for Rebellion; He is not Ignorant of there being more than ten

Proteſtants to one *Papiſt* in thoſe Armies; therefore as our Engagement in that Affair was much greater, we may expect to Suffer as largely for it in time to come, for he has the ſame Argument againſt us, which he will uſe in time Convenient, This is the moſt unwarrantable thing that ever was done, and it will be as equitable, that all the *Whigs*, or *Tories* in *England* ſuffer Death, on Account of any one of the Party deſerving it for Stealing of Horſes.

The Repeal of the *Triennial* Act is a thing that every *Engliſh* Man ought to look at with Horror, for the Parliament will ſit, its laſt four Years, by it's own Election, and the Commons, therefore, no longer repreſent the People which deprives us of our Birth-Right, and gives a Precedent, by which the Court may continue, or diſſolve Parliaments as it pleaſes, and lodge rhe whole Legiſlative Power in rhe Crown. Beſides, when the laſt Four Years are expired, it's not to be doubted but the ſame Parliament will be continued, and perpetuated if the Kings Occaſions ſhall require it, but as the Army will know how to raiſe Money without a Parliament, and thereby render it uſeleſs, we may expect it's being totally laid aſide, for as the Commons once voted the Lords uſeleſs, the Army may vote the Commons ſo too.

Fetching the *Scotch* Priſoners to *Carliſle* for Tryal manifeſtly deprives the Subject of his Birth Right, and gives a Power to the Crown of having Criminals Try'd wherever the King pleaſes, for by this Innovation, the Subjects of *England* may be as well ſent to *Scotland*, *Ireland*, or *Hanover*; for Tryal in any ſuch Caſe as the *Scots* could be brought to *Carliſle*, which will make the King ſole Arbiter of us and all that we enjoy.

The late League made with *France* and *Holland* was made, on the Part of King *George* againſt us, for at the Time of it's being made, we were in Peace with all the World, nor was there at that Time, a Prince upon Earth that threatned Diſturbance to the Government of King *George*; Indeed 'twas ſaid to be made againſt the Son of the late King *James*, but that I fear is a Blind to us, whil'ſt King *George* is making himſelf compleatly Maſter of our Lives, and Fortunes; for he has the whole *Fleet*, *Treaſury*, and *Army* in his Hands, and that Gentleman has not Bread but at the Courteſy of others, nor Place to lay his Head that he can call his own, therefore, it muſt be a great Propoſition to pretend that he, who commands the whole Force of one of the powerfulleſt Nations in *Europe*, ſhould have Cauſe given

him

for calling two other, of the moſt Powerful, to aid him againſt that Gentleman in thoſe deplorable Circumſtances, ſo that it's very Apparent thoſe Preparations are againſt us, the People of *England*, and when he who is ſtyl'd our King, ſhall make Leagues againſt us, whom he calls his People, many muſt be the Miſeries that we are to undergo.

The diſcoveries lately made of a Deſign in the King of *Sweden* of invading us, are an early Manifeſtation of the bad Conſequences that attend the Violation of the Limitation Act, by the Purchaſe already mention'd, of that Part of the *Swediſh* Dominions call'd *Bremen* and *Verden*; for, our moſt Ancient, Powerful, and ever faithful Ally, the King of *Sweden*, with whom the *Britiſh* Nation ever was in Peace, and ſtricteſt Friendſhip, is made our Enemy by it; Our *Northern* Trade Interrupted, an Expenſive War brought upon us, and the *Proteſtant* Intereſt extreamly Injur'd. It was pretended, as a Colour to that breach of publick Faith in ſending a Fleet into the *Baltick*, that the *Swedes* had committed ſeveral Acts of Hoſtility on ſome of our Nation trading in the *Baltick*, but it is notorious that not one Ship of ours was ever touched, or detain'd by them, but what was carrying Proviſions to their Enemies, which is lawful by the Uſage and Rights of Nations, and the very Thing we frequently did to them in our late War with *France*. It is alſo ſaid that our late Diſcoveries prove a Deſign in the King of *Sweden* of invading us in Favour of the Son of the late King *James*. Indeed, ſo far it may be true that the King of *Sweden* may purpoſe Repriſals under the cover of that Gentlemans Name, to make his Attempts the more Succeſsful, but his Reſentment takes it's riſe from the Wrongs, Inſults, and Indignities offered him by King *George*, for the Increaſe of his Foreign Dominions, for it is a direct Impoſition to ſay that the King of *Sweden* would plunge himſelf into a New War, with ſo powerful a Nation, in Favour of another, when he can hardly defend himſelf from the many Enemies he is invaded by, The Cauſe the King of *Sweden* is engag'd in is his own, and when he has receiv'd ſatisfaction, it is not to be ſuppoſed he will regard the Cauſe of another at a Time in which he muſt hazard his own for it.

This fatal Purchaſe may alſo create a Jealouſy in the *Emperor*, and Princes of the *Empire*, that may inflame all *Europe*, and be attended with very bad Conſequences to us in particular, for it cannot be pleaſing to them that the ſame Perſon ſhould be King of *England*, and Elector of *Hanover*, in ſtrict and perpetual

Alliance

Alliance with *Pruſſia*, and making daily increaſe of his Dominions in the *Empire*, to the Prejudice and Terror of neighbouring Princes, for there ever was regard had to the Ballance of the *Empire*, which they will never conſent ſhall fall into the Hand of a King of *England*. Beſides, whatever Land Force ſhall be kept up, or Shipping fitted out, through Fears given by the King of *Sweden*, the Foreign Dominions ought to pay the whole Expenſe thereof, ſince it will be occaſion'd in their Defence, and the Act of Limitation has particularly provided, that the *Britiſh* Nation ſhall not ſuffer in its Wealth, Power, and Trade, in their Defence. &c. But to ſave thoſe Dominions, and bring the whole Burthen of the War upon us, the Court would perſwade, that *Sweden* Acts not for it ſelf, but one whom they will have *England*, only, to be concern'd againſt and thereby, make this Nation Principal, and ſole manager of a War it has no concern in, as to it ſelf.

King *George* requir'd a large Sum of the Parliament ſince this Alarm from *Sweden*, to ſtrengthen his Alliances; but he has declar'd himſelf free from all Apprehenſion of Danger to his Perſon or Government, from any Thing that *Sweden* can do, and conſequently that we have no Enemy that any way Diſquiets him, therefore, he can have no Occaſion for greater Friendſhips than he has already made, but if he is ſtill in Fear of the King of *Sweden*, and that be the Reaſon why he would Strengthen his Alliances, his Foreign Dominions that made *Sweden* his Enemy, ought to advance him the Money for it.

If a War be enter'd into in defence of the Foreign Dominions, there are but two Expedients left to prevent the utter Ruin of this unfortunate Nation, One is by calling in our Exil'd King, which will put an End to it. And the other by obliging the Foreign Dominions to defray the whole Expence of the Wars that England may enter into in their Defence.

We have nothing againſt that Gentleman but his Religion, which he may quitt, upon ſuch Arguments as may be uſed againſt it, for the Queſtion has not been put to him, and if the Experiment be Try'd, I ſhall not deſpair of the *Proteſtant* Arguments prevailing. But in caſe it ſhould not, let it be conſider'd that the *Papiſts* are not one to a Hundred of the People, alſo what Laws bind the King in the Caſe, and the Experience his Fathers Miſſortunes have given him, and us, and then his Principles will not ſeem to any Man of common Underſtanding, a Reaſon why we ſhould connive at the Deſtruction of our Coun-

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try to keep him out of it. We learn, by his Fathers Misfortunes, that it will not be in his Power to eſtabliſh *Popery* in this Nation, and thoſe Misfortunes of his Father, forbid the very Appearance of an Inclination to the propagating thoſe Principles, and the Truth is, his Religion never was the true Cauſe of our keeping him out of the Kingdom, for we thought there was too great a Power in the Crown, for the ſafety of the Subject; and concluded his being Born immediate Heir to the Crown, would continue the Power in it that he would find it Poſſeſt of, when a King elected to it would receive it under ſuch Reſtraints as we the Electors, ſhould lay it under, and that his Iſſue, would not be able to extend the Prerogative beyond that he had enjoy'd, but thoſe Meaſures are broken by the Party that made 'em and nothing now can ſerve us, but the King's Reſtoration, for if the Foreign Dominions were ſold out right, their whole Worth will not mantain a War two Years, if a War to come ſhould prove as Expenſive as the War paſt; beſides the Recompenſe we ought to think of for the Loſs of blood, and Interruption of our Trade, that being the great Article of Proſperity to us.

Our late Wars loaded the Nation with a vaſt Debt which is yet unpaid, and ſince increas'd. A Torrent of Calamities broke in upon us ſince the Demiſe of the late Queen, We are, threatned with a new War that may involve all *Europe* in blood, our Debts encreaſe, Factions multiply, and our Miſeries ſeem unlimited; Indeed, it is propos'd that 10000 Men ſhall be Reduc'd, but that will not ſecure our Liberties from the Power of the King's prerogative, for there will near 40000 remain when that is done, which will be an Intolerable Check upon the Nation; and an expenſe, that will make no Difference to us between Peace and War, and the landed Intereſt will never ſee the end of it's Load. They ſay too, that we are to be ſweetn'd with an Act of Grace, and the Nation I ſuppoſe is to be very thankfull, ſince King *George* has taken ſo vaſt a Number of Lives, that he Spares the reſt. I pray God it proves not a Net for the Birds that are Flown, for by what has been I think it not unreaſonable to expect that this may be.

I am now convinc'd, and ſorry 'twas not earlier, that nothing can deliver us from utmoſt Peril but the Kings Reſtoration, who (by Accounts of him from all Hands) if our Eyes could but ſee, and our Ears Hear, would be ſoon receiv'd into our Hearts, and if you cannot yet ſay *Amen* with me that it may be ſo, I aſſure my ſelf that a little longer Time will bring you to it, and am.

SIR,

your humble Servant

WM. THOMAS.

try to keep him out of it. We learn, by his Fathers Misfortunes, that it will not be in his Power to establish Popery in this Nation, and those Mistakes of his Father, (owing the very Appearance of an Inclination to the [illegible] Principles of our keeping him out of the Throne, his Religion never was the true Cause was too great a Power in the Crown, for the safety of the Subject; and contented his being Immediate Heir to the Crown, would contribute Power in it that he would find it Popish or, were a King elected to it would receive it under such Restraints as we the Electors, should lay it under, and that his Time, would not be allowed to extend the Prerogative beyond that he had enjoy'd, but those Mistakes are broken by the Party that made them and nothing now can deter us, but the King's Resolution, that if the Foreign Dominions were lost out right, after whole Work will not maintain a War two Years, is a War to come should prove as Expensive as the War past; besides the Reconquest we ought to think of for the Loss of blood, and Interruption of our Trade, that being the great Article of Property to us.

Our late Wars loaded the Nation with a vast Debt which is yet unpaid, and daily increased. A Tyrant of Christian blood in upon us since the Demise of the late Queen. We are threatned with a new War that may involve all Europe in blood, our Debts encrease, Taxations multiply, and our Misteries seem unlimited; Indeed, it is proposed that Popish Men shall be Disabled, but that will not secure our Liberties from the Power of the King's prerogative, for there will near upon Fifteen Millions that [illegible] be an Intolerable Check upon the Nation; and an experie[illegible] will make no Difference to us between Peace and War, and the landed Interest will never be ridden of it's Load. They lay too, that we are to be Invaded with an Aid of Grace, and the Nation I suppose is to be very thankfull, since King George has [illegible] to raise a Number of Lives, that he spares the rest. [illegible] it proves not a Net for the Birds that are flown [illegible] been I think it not unreasonable to expect that [illegible] may be.

I am now convinc'd, and sorry I was not earlier, that nothing can deliver us from utmost Peril but the Kings Restoration, who (by Accounts of him from all Hands) if our Affairs could be, and our Ears Hear, would be soon Restor'd into our Hearts, and if you cannot yet lay down with me that it may be so, I calling my self that a little longer Time will bring you to it, and am,

S I R,

Your humble Servant

W. T[illegible]s.